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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 002317

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/10/2008

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [PHUM](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: GOT CONTINUES TO DELAY ARTICLE 98 AGREEMENT

REF: 02 ANKARA 8534 AND PREVIOUS

Classified by DCM Robert Deutsch; reasons 1.5 (b and d).

[1](#)1. (U) Action request--para 3.

[1](#)2. (C) Feza Ozturk, head of the MFA International Political Organizations Department, told us April 7 the MFA has put its consideration of a draft bilateral Article 98 agreement on hold. Ozturk attributed the hold to "the situation in Iraq." He averred that the MFA supports an agreement in principle, but does not want to expose the GOT to speculation about why it is signing such an agreement during the war. We responded that the USG is looking for areas of cooperation it can point to in its relationship with Turkey. Ozturk replied that MFA DG for Multilateral Political Affairs Batibay has decided against signing an agreement until after the conflict in Iraq.

[1](#)3. (C) Comment and action request: Once again the GOT has given a reason to delay an agreement. Until such time as EU members begin to accept agreements we believe Turkey will continue to avoid concluding an agreement with us. A sustained, high-level effort might gain traction, but we would welcome information on the status of Article 98 discussions with the EU and leading EU members.
PEARSON